



May 22, 2020

VIRTUAL CONNECTING...



LINCOLN, RI - Dina Mission Center

It all started with Covid 19 and the request by the governor of Rhode Island to wear a mask in public. We quickly realized that the paper version we had received at the last doctor's appointment would not survive a week. This realization led us to the trusty Internet —source of all useful information. There we discovered sewing patterns for face masks that met the governor's recommendations.

Fortunately, Ocean State Job Lot (a local store that buys closeouts and then re-sells merchandise at a great discount) advertised free fabric for anyone wishing to make face masks. That was all the incentive we needed. Actually, the "fabric" is table napkins and comes in a variety of colors.

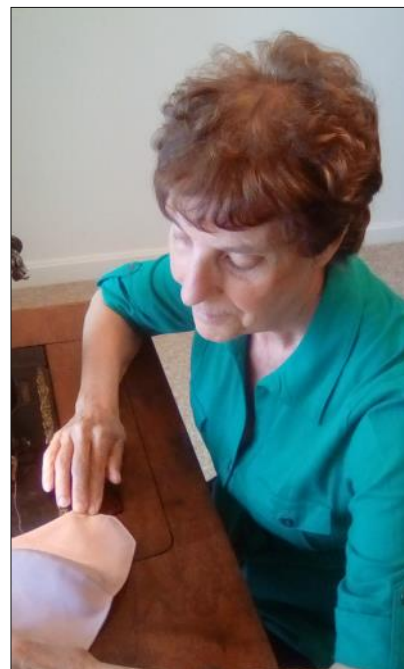
My niece and her family were in dire need of masks, so we began our production; however, we ran into a major obstacle. All the area stores had no elastic for the ear pieces. Not to worry - there was always Amazon. The order placed on April 21 should arrive in 3-4 days. Not so! By May 1st we discovered that our precious elastic was coming from the garment district in New York and was somewhere in Muncie, NY. It never arrived. Amazon failed us!

Necessity is the mother of invention. We looked around to see if there was anything we could use. In desperation, we raided a bag of clothing destined for Good Will. There we discovered a top that had just the right elasticity, and so we began to manufacture ear loops.

Since our initial production, we have sent out some of our finished products to members of our JM family who appear to be satisfied customers. This led us to expand our production and make another visit to Job Lot for additional fabric. We also experienced the answer to our prayers when we discovered elastic used for pony tails. Our masks now have an even added attraction—fashionable ties.

Hopefully, this pandemic will abate and we can all discard the masks and smile once again at each other!

- Srs. Jacqueline Crepeau, RJM (above) and Mary Crepeau, RJM (below)



PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI - Maison Claudine Thevenet

Here in Haiti, in general people are taking COVID-19 very casually. Though we have partial lock down with all the schools and universities closed, still people are doing small commerce are in the streets as usual especially in the towns and villages. On the other hand, it is also a fact that if they stay home doing nothing, they are going to die of hunger. They really don't have much choice.

We, the community of Port-au-Prince were able to provide food kits to almost 350 families. Each kit contains oil, beans, spaghetti, corn, sugar, dry milk, spices and washing soap.

First 200 families were also each given a water bucket to keep in their houses to wash hands.

Later when the number kept increasing, we concentrated on giving food kits only.



The families in our project *PAS A PAS*, patients in the *ATELYE* (Prosthesis Clinic) and some other families we know which make 100 families altogether will continue getting food kits monthly till the situation with *COVID - 19* gets better.

We thank our Sisters and other benefactors for their generous donations and keep our morale up, believing like St. Claudine,

"God will provide!"

- Sr. Farzana Philip, RJM

VIRTUAL CONNECTING...beyond our borders



LAHORE, PAKISTAN - Provincial House

When the heavy curtain of the Lock-down was drawn, for a while life seemed just pointless to continue.

Certainly, it has slowed the breakneck speed of our daily lives, but the various activities in the stages of Formation go on without interruption over here.



Our five Temporary Professed Sisters, among them, four doing their Intensive Juniorate, are making their 30-day retreat with Sr. Mari Puy Montaner (Juniorate Mistress) up in our Murree Convent, which is a beautiful hill town, noted for its pleasant summer climate. Our three young Postulants had their 'Reception into the Novitiate Ceremony' and were happy to take the next step in their Formation.

For the first time in the history of our Province, the First Vow ceremony of four of our Novices took place in the absence of their families, a courageous choice on their part.



They were privileged to make this big sacrifice on this special day of their life. May our dear Mother Foundress be well pleased with the sacrifice of her young daughters.



Our Juniors and Novices...

Do we look locked down?

Indeed, it has been a time to experience the combination of joy, friendship, involvement, growth, family spirit, learning Spanish, anguish as well as some exceptional moments.

- Sr. Iram George, RJM

CLOSING OF LAUDATO SI WEEK



A special day of prayer on **May 24th** will mark the closing of “Laudato Si’ week. All over the world, people are coming together at **12 noon** to offer prayers for the planet, and renew their commitment to care for our common home. You can find resources for this in the letter of Sr. Ann Scholz of LCWR, attached to the Bridges email.

LAUDATO SI WEEK - May 16-24



To mark the 5th anniversary of Pope Francis’ encyclical, *Laudato Si*, members of the province JPIC Committee took part in ‘virtual’ gatherings to explore and celebrate this call to *Care for our Common Home*. Given below are their reflections on what they learned and experienced. Most of these are also available online, and you are invited to take advantage of this opportunity to learn more, and to “acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face.” (LS, 15)

Retreat Experience – May 16-17

The purpose of the retreat, offered by the *Global Catholic Climate Covenant* was to familiarize participants with the Introduction and Chapter 1 of the encyclical. The organizers employed the use of presenters, video clips, reflection time, prayer and ritual to emphasize their message.

The first presentation given by Dr. Erin Lothes was enlightening as well as reaffirming what we already knew. She focused on our interconnectedness with all of God’s creation and, as Pope Francis indicated in the document, how our choices and technological advances have been detrimental to Mother Earth and all of creation.

The second speaker, Tomas Insua, spoke about St. Francis and his love for creation encouraging us to develop an ecological spirituality. He encouraged us to be more present to the beauty that surrounds us and to pray with creation, not only for creation. He concluded by leading us in the Laudato Si chaplet praising God for Sister Air, Sister Water, Brother Fire, and Sister Mother Earth.

The question and answer part at the end of the presentations was also enlightening. From them we learned to consider how we communicate our message and that Yale University has a special portion of their website called Eco America to help. View Eco America by going to: <https://ecoamerica.org/>.



Catholic Climate Covenant™
Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

Another question invited these practical steps we can take now:

- Educate our friends, family and associates as to what is taking place and the importance of going forward with change
- Increase renewable energy – electric cars, composting and recycling
- Connect with others who inspire you
- Realize that God is the Creator – have Hope

On the 2nd day of the Retreat we were invited to listen so as to hear the cry of Creation, and the cry of children. We need to acknowledge the cry of future generations.

We need to grieve for our global indifference to what we are doing to Mother Earth. Creation is calling us to take care, to consume less.

Despite the prevailing seeming indifference to what is happening to the world around us we must keep faith that Evil is not invincible: Death leads to LIFE.

All were invited to make the LAUDATO SI PLEDGE: ***To pray for and with creation,
To live more simply
To advocate to protect our common home.***

Human beings are capable of the worst, yet also capable of rising above self, and make a new start; a new way of being a Cosmic family.

Srs. Mariam Norick, RJM and Diane Dube, RJM

Panel Laudato Si at 5-As Prophetic and Relevant As Ever - May 18

Panelists: Christiana Figueres, one of the architects of the Paris Agreement.
Fr. Augusto Davies, who co-leads the Vatican COVID task force.

I experienced both panelists as prophets of our time reflecting on and responding to Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*. These are highlights that I found worth remembering and sharing:

- Both spoke highly of Pope Francis and the encyclical and its naming of climate change as the “mother of all injustices.” It reminds us of our obligation and responsibility to go the roots of the injustice.
- In light of the current pandemic, the virus is connected with the way we treat our common home and its residents. COVID is an *acute crisis* that is like a warning to us and gives us a foretaste of what will happen if the climate crisis (*a chronic crisis*) is not taken seriously as an instructive moment.
- The health crisis and the economic crisis have collided, making this an unprecedented opportunity to “reset the button” to *build back better* in every way.
- We don't change from our minds. We change from “below” when we are moved by compassion for our brothers and sisters who “live under the line of dignity.” We need to align ourselves with those who care for the future of humanity.
- You can watch this webinar on *You Tube* on the Laudato Si's Week link, by clicking on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssYIOWiG87k>,

Laudato Si at 5: As Prophetic and Relevant As Ever

Sr. Kathleen Scanlon, RJM

Both speakers reminded us of our interconnected world, emphasizing that radical measures are needed and that it's possible to save our Mother Earth. Emphasis was placed on using our experience with the corona virus as a springboard for bold action. The next 3 to 18 months are crucial.

It was particularly energizing to hear the speaker note that our world has been willing to make the many changes to lifestyle during this pandemic. The possibility for radical change is hopeful.

This workshop helped me to see that our individual efforts make a difference and encouraged me to communicate more and support the younger generation in my family about the message of Laudato Si.

Sr. Diane Dube, RJM

Webinar Eco-spirituality: Deepening Our Communion With Creation - May 19



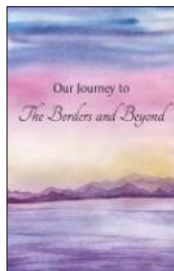
Featured Speaker: Mary Evelyn Tucker, co-founder of the Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology

The heart of this presentation was a call to a change of mindset, from seeing the world from the viewpoint of management and consumerism, to viewing the universe as a communion of subjects, each creature with a place in the harmony of creation. The speaker drew on images from incarnational and sacramental theology to emphasize the universal kinship we share, and case studies showed concrete applications of this vision in varied parts of the world.

Definitely worth seeing! View the webinar at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOdgg10eHIU>

Sr. Rosemary Mangan, RJM

REMINDER



The Summer 2020 issue of *Occasional Papers, Our Journey to the Borders and Beyond*, looks at the call to religious in these chaotic and rapidly changing times. Writers explore the kind of presence religious are invited to embody for the sake of the world. How do we live with authenticity, integrity, and depth this spiritual journey that takes us to the borders of what we have known and compels us to move beyond? What does the world most need for us to be? In addition, the issue features an interview with the poet, David Whyte, and an array of articles that probe the spiritual journey and what the mission of religious life might mean as we move into the future.

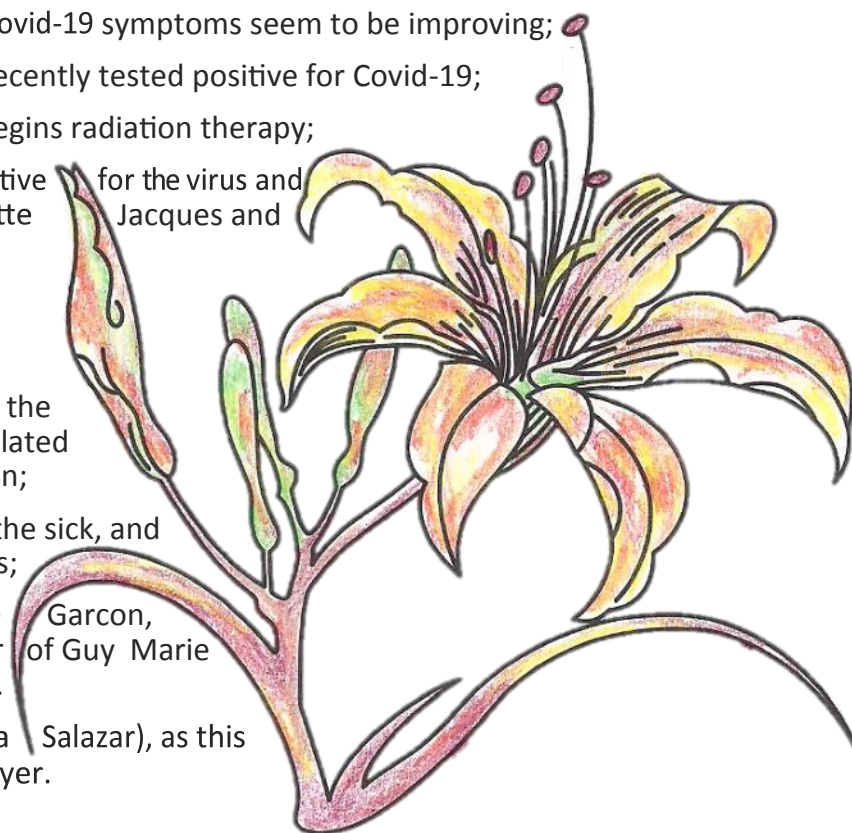
To order, please send your name to Rita at ricker@rjmusa.org before May 26.

PROVINCE OFFICE

March 16 - TBD Srs. Marge, Mary, Anne and Rita continue teleworking due to Maryland and DC requiring non-essential businesses to close. As of now, we do not know how long this will last but, we will keep you updated.

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR...

- Sr. Lourdes Saracho, RJM whose Covid-19 symptoms seem to be improving;
- Sr. Jacqueline Jacques, RJM who recently tested positive for Covid-19;
- Sr. Christine Carrigg, RJM as she begins radiation therapy;
- Thomas Hagan, who has tested positive for the virus and who is the nephew of Sr. Antoinette Jacques and Sr. Jacqueline Jacques.
- Haiti and the Haitian people;
- The whole planet - all of creation;
- For all those who lost their lives in the airplane crash in the densely populated residential area of Karachi, Pakistan;
- First responders, those caring for the sick, and and for those sick with coronavirus;
- The repose of the soul of Celianise Garcon, wife of Marcel Garcon and mother of Guy Marie Garcon. Celianise died on May 18.
- St. Theresa's Convent (Sr. Sandra Salazar), as this week's community for special prayer.



**WE ALSO PRAY FOR ALL THE NEEDS OF OUR RJM SISTERS,
FAMILY AND FRIENDS.**

<https://rjmusa.org>

Praised Forever Be Jesus and Mary